

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRETOR 04912 221817Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00
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O 221705Z AUG 78 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2226
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS PRETORIA 4912

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, WA, SF
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: AHTISAARI'S FINAL DAY; STEYN INTERVIEW

1. PRESS REPORTS OF AUGUST 22 EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF
TODAY'S FINAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE
AHTISAARI AND AG STEYN. DIE TRANSVALER SAYS THAT "HOPEFULLY

MR. AHTISAARI WILL SHED MORE LIGHT ON THE RESULTS OF HIS TWO-
WEEK VISIT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE HE WILL HOLD AT THE AIRPORT
BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE."

2. THE RAND DAILY MAIL AND DIE TRANSVALER BOTH REPORT THAT

THE QUESTIONS OF TARGET DATE FOR INDEPENDENCE AND ELECTIONS
AND THE VOTER REGISTRATION CAMPAIGN REMAIN THE STICKING ISSUES.

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NO INDICATION WAS GIVEN IN EITHER PAPER OF ANY SUGGESTED
RESOLUTION OF THE TWO POINTS.

3. IN A SABC REPORT OF AUGUST 21 CONCERNING HIS SABC
INTERVIEW OF PREVIOUS DAY, AG STEYN IS REPORTED TO HAVE
SAID THAT THE INTERIM RADIO BOARD SET UP BY HIMSELF FOR
THE TERRITORY WILL BE TAKING OVER CONTROL OF BROAD-

CASTING THIS WEEK AND WILL DETERMINE THE CONTENT OF BROADCASTS. HIS COMMENTS IN AN INTERVIEW WITH SABC WERE IN RESPONSE TO AN AHTISAARI COMMENT THAT SUGGESTED THE INFORMATION MEDIA IN THE TERRITORY WERE NOT IMPARTIAL ENOUGH. STEYN CLAIMED SWAPO WAS BROADCASTING EXTREMELY DANGEROUS ENEMY PROPAGANDA OVER SHORTWAVE RADIO AND THAT LOCAL RADIO SERVICES HAD TO BE PREPARED TO COUNTER THOSE BROADCASTS TO AN EXTENT.

4. DURING THE SAME INTERVIEW AND IN REGARD TO REGISTRATION, STEYN SAID THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION WAS THAT THREE QUARTERS OF THE POSSIBLE VOTERS WERE ALREADY REGISTERED. BEGINNING THE REGISTRATION ALL OVER WOULD, ACCORDING TO STEYN, AMOUNT TO A NEGATION OF THE CLEAR STATEMENT OF THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE. AS STEYN SEES IT, REGISTRATION OF SO MANY VOTERS IN SUCH A SHORT TIME SHOWED THAT THE POLITICAL CLIMATE IS RIGHT FOR THE FURTHER UNFOLDING OF THE POLITICAL PROCESS. STEYN ALSO INDICATED HE WAS NOT ALTOGETHER CERTAIN WHAT AHTISAARI MEANT WITH HIS STATEMENT THAT IT WAS A LONG WAY AHEAD BEFORE CREATING A SUITABLE ATMOSPHERE FOR FREE ELECTIONS. LENGTHY EXERPTS FROM STEYN INTERVIEW AND AHTISAARI INTERVIEW ON SAME PROGRAM WILL FOLLOW SEPTTEL. EDMONDSON

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